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SONIC™
THE HEDGEHOG
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG | 278
PEPPERS & DUSTIN UNGER

Welcome to Sonic's comic book adventures—a world unique & beyond what you know from the SEGA games! Where Sonic and his friends work to save the world from the forces of evil!

CHARACTER SELECT

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG
THE FASTEST THING ALIVE

ANTOINE D'COOLETTE
SOLDIER & SWORDSMAN

BIG THE CAT
GENTLE GIANT

CHIP
ANCIENT SPIRIT

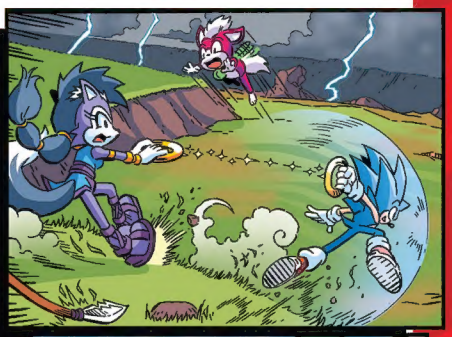
???

SONIC™ THE HEDGEHOG

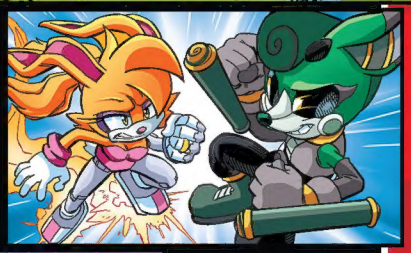
PREVIOUSLY...

PATHS OF DUTY

Sonic the Hedgehog and his friends, the **Freedom Fighters,** have set out to restore the **Shattered World!** To do that, they will need access to the seven sacred **Gaia Temples!**



Sonic is travelling the globe at super-speed seeking the seven **Gaia Keys** protected by their **Gaia Guardians!**



Meanwhile, **Sally** and **Bunnie** are on the hunt for the final **Chaos Emerald!**

They need all seven emeralds to power the temples—
but they've run into serious trouble...

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FACE OF THE ENEMY
Part One: FRIENDS IN NEED
ARID SANDS ZONE...
IT'S JUST A LITTLE AMBUSH, GUYS! WE'RE STILL GOOD! WE'RE STILL GOOD!
SONIC QUICKEST OF ALL
CHIP BRAVE...ISH
BIG APTLY NAMED
ANTOINE SWORDSMAN
WRITER: IAN FLYNN • PENCILS: ADAM BRYCE THOMAS • INKS: TERRY AUSTIN
COLORS: GABRIEL CASSATA • LETTERS: JOHN WORKMAN
COVER BY JAMAL PEPPERS, TERRY AUSTIN AND ELAINA UNGER
MANIACAL VARIANT BY RAFA KNIGHT
ASSISTANT EDITOR: JONATHAN H. GRAY • EDITOR: VINCENT LOVALLO
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: VICTOR GORELICK • PRESIDENT: MIKE PELLERITO
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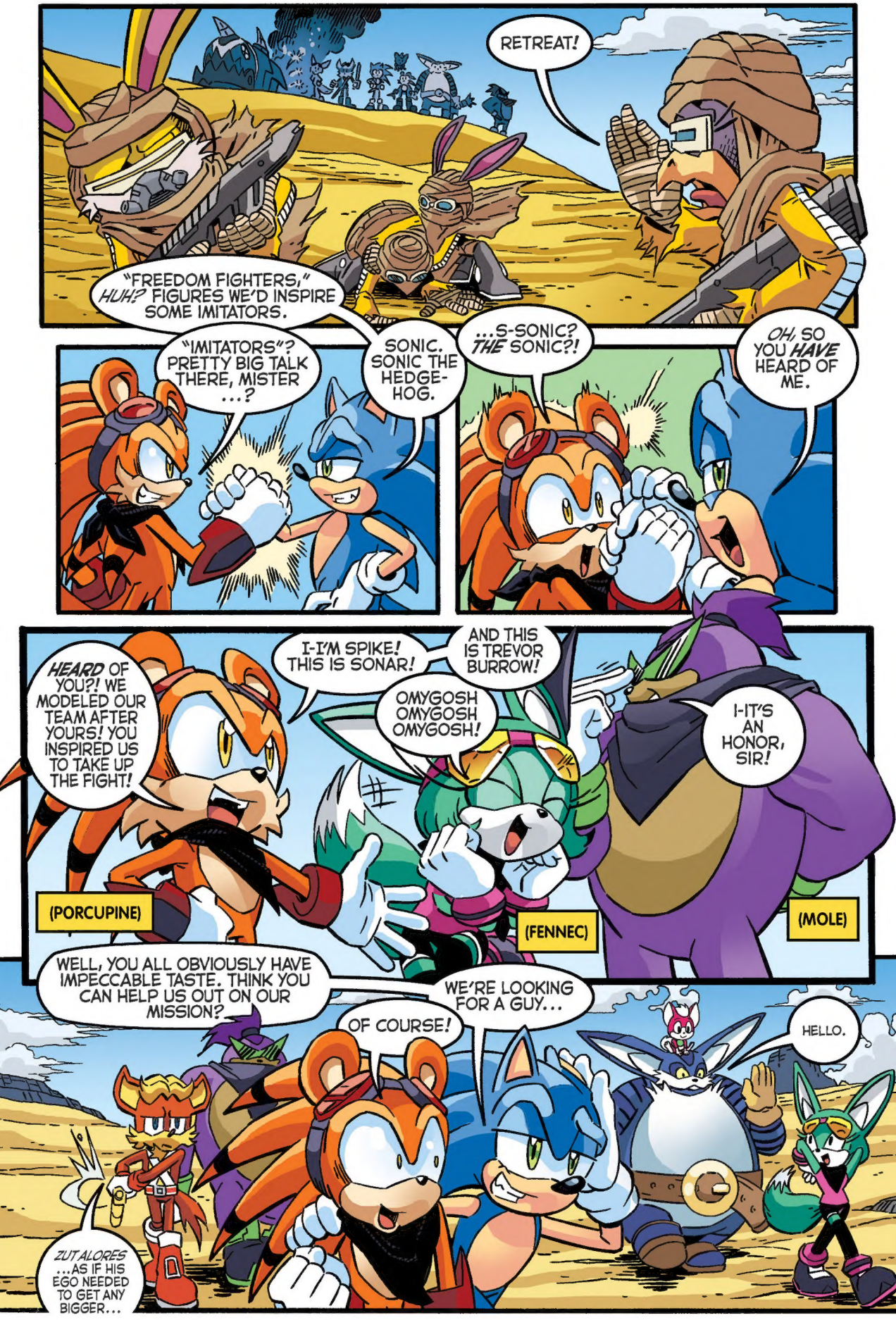
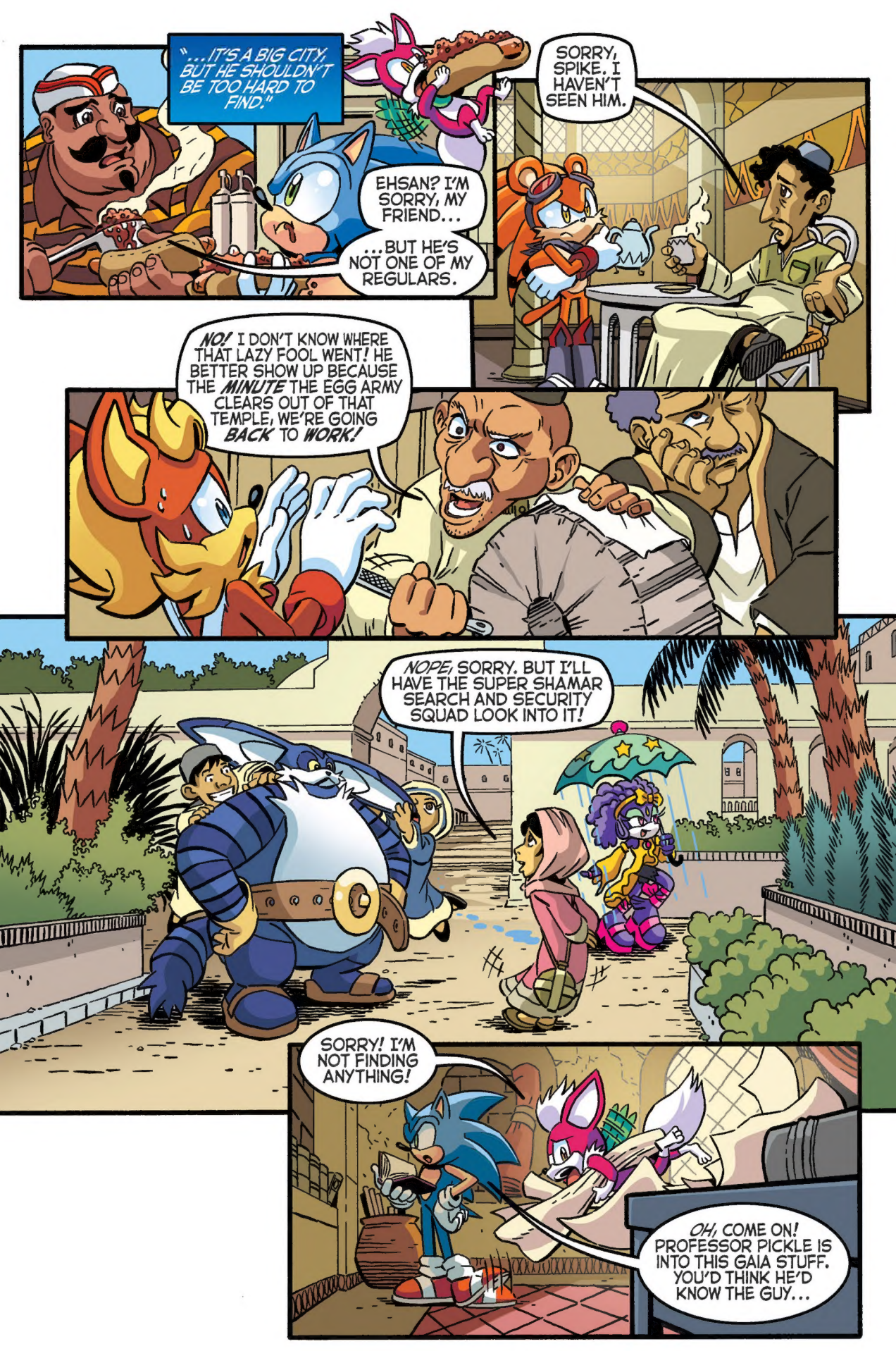
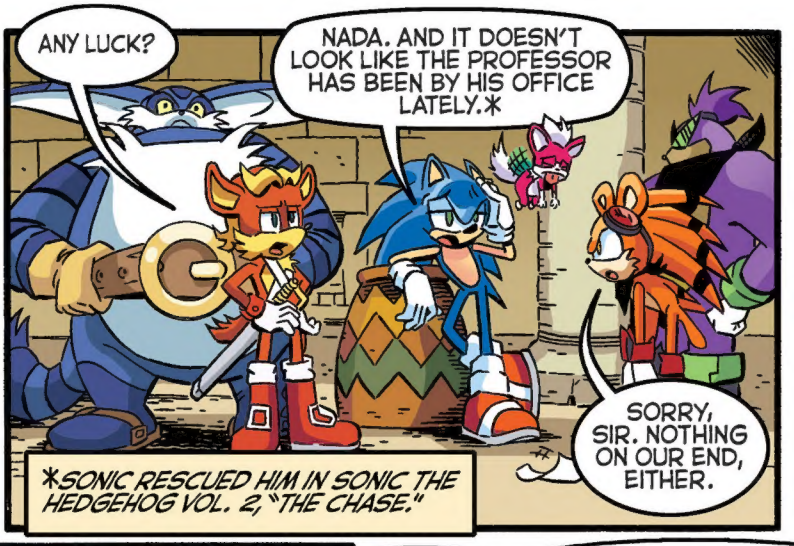
SPECIAL THANKS TO STACY ARNOLD-STRYDER, SANDRA JO AND MAI KIYOTAKI AT SEGA LICENSING

CLONK!
MERCY BUCKETS!
NICE ONE!
THAT'S "MERCI BEAUCOUP," BUT YOU ARE BEING WELCOME ALL THE SA-A*YYY?!*
SONIC! HORDE COMMANDER! *HORDE COMMANDER!*
RRRRRUMBLE!
JUST A SEC', 'TWAN! KINDA GOT MY HANDS FULL!
GOTCHA COVERED!

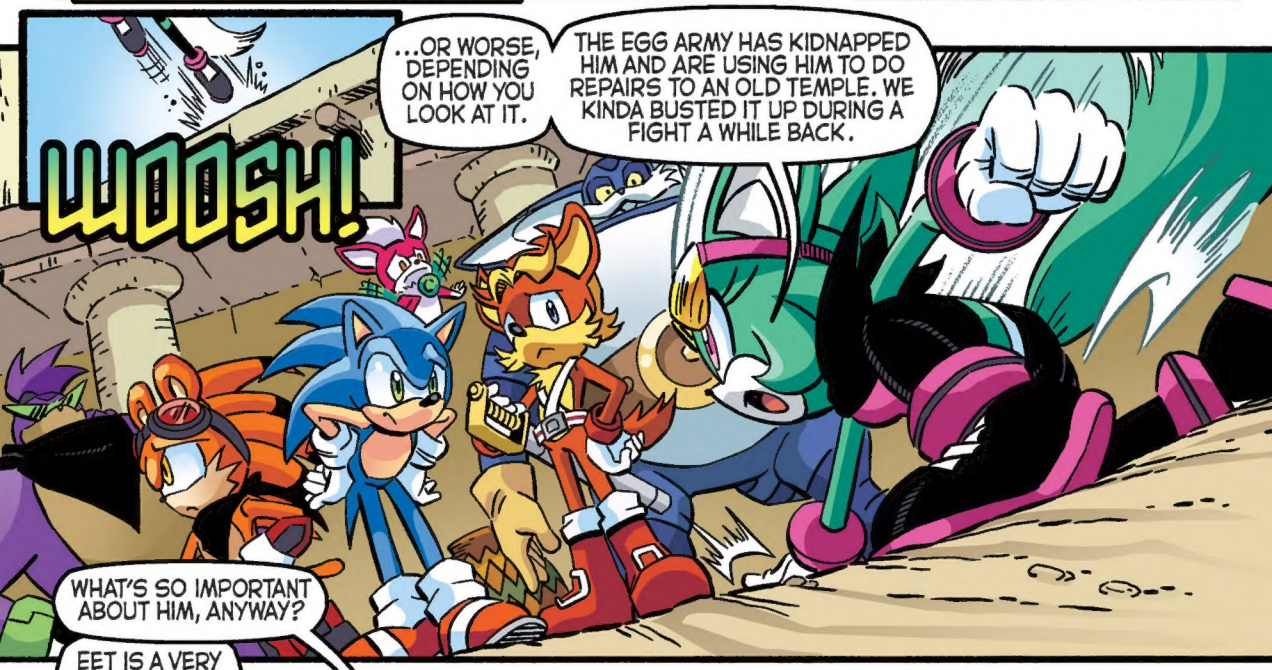
CRACK!
HAHA-- OKAY. WHO THE HECK IS THAT?
thwp
WHO THE HECK ARE YOU?
GAH! AND WHAT THE HECK WAS THAT?!
WE'RE THE CAVALRY!
"OR, AS THE LOCALS LIKE TO CALL US...
"...THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS!"
SHRRRRP


RETREAT!
"FREEDOM FIGHTERS," HUH? FIGURES WE'D INSPIRE SOME IMITATORS.
"IMITATORS"? PRETTY BIG TALK THERE, MISTER ...?
SONIC. SONIC THE HEDGE-HOG.
...S-SONIC? THE SONIC?!
OH, SO YOU HAVE HEARD OF ME.
HEARD OF YOU?! WE MODELED OUR TEAM AFTER YOURS! YOU INSPIRED US TO TAKE UP THE FIGHT!
I-I'M SPIKE! THIS IS SONAR!
AND THIS IS TREVOR BURROW!
OMYGOSH OMYGOSH OMYGOSH!
I-IT'S AN HONOR, SIR!
(PORCUPINE)
(FENNEC)
(MOLE)
WELL, YOU ALL OBVIOUSLY HAVE IMPECCABLE TASTE. THINK YOU CAN HELP US OUT ON OUR MISSION?
OF COURSE!
WE'RE LOOKING FOR A GUY...
HELLO.
ZUT ALORES ...AS IF HIS EGO NEEDED TO GET ANY BIGGER...

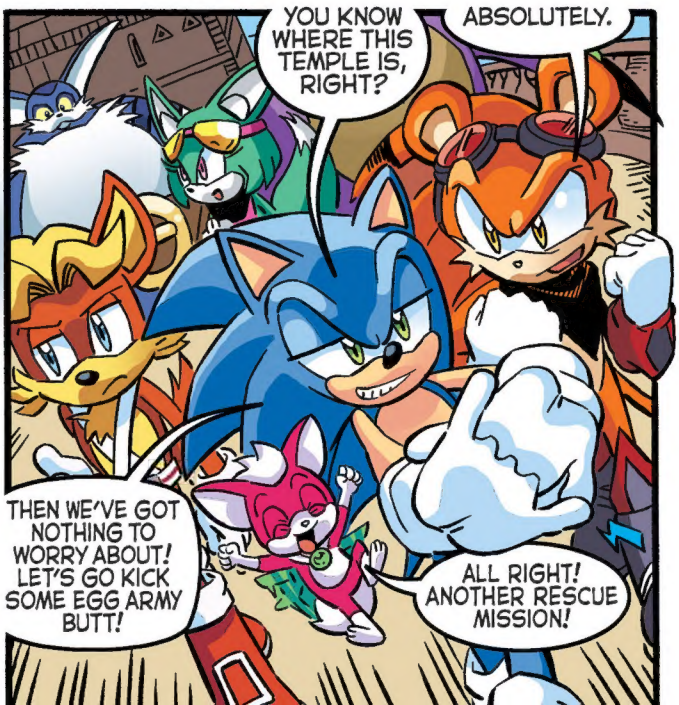

"...IT'S A BIG CITY, BUT HE SHOULDN'T BE TOO HARD TO FIND."
EHSAN? I'M SORRY, MY FRIEND...
...BUT HE'S NOT ONE OF MY REGULARS.
SORRY, SPIKE. I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM.
NO! I DON'T KNOW WHERE THAT LAZY FOOL WENT! HE BETTER SHOW UP BECAUSE THE MINUTE THE EGG ARMY CLEARS OUT OF THAT TEMPLE, WE'RE GOING BACK TO WORK!
NOPE, SORRY. BUT I'LL HAVE THE SUPER SHAMAR SEARCH AND SECURITY SQUAD LOOK INTO IT!
SORRY! I'M NOT FINDING ANYTHING!
OH, COME ON! PROFESSOR PICKLE IS INTO THIS GAIA STUFF. YOU'D THINK HE'D KNOW THE GUY...

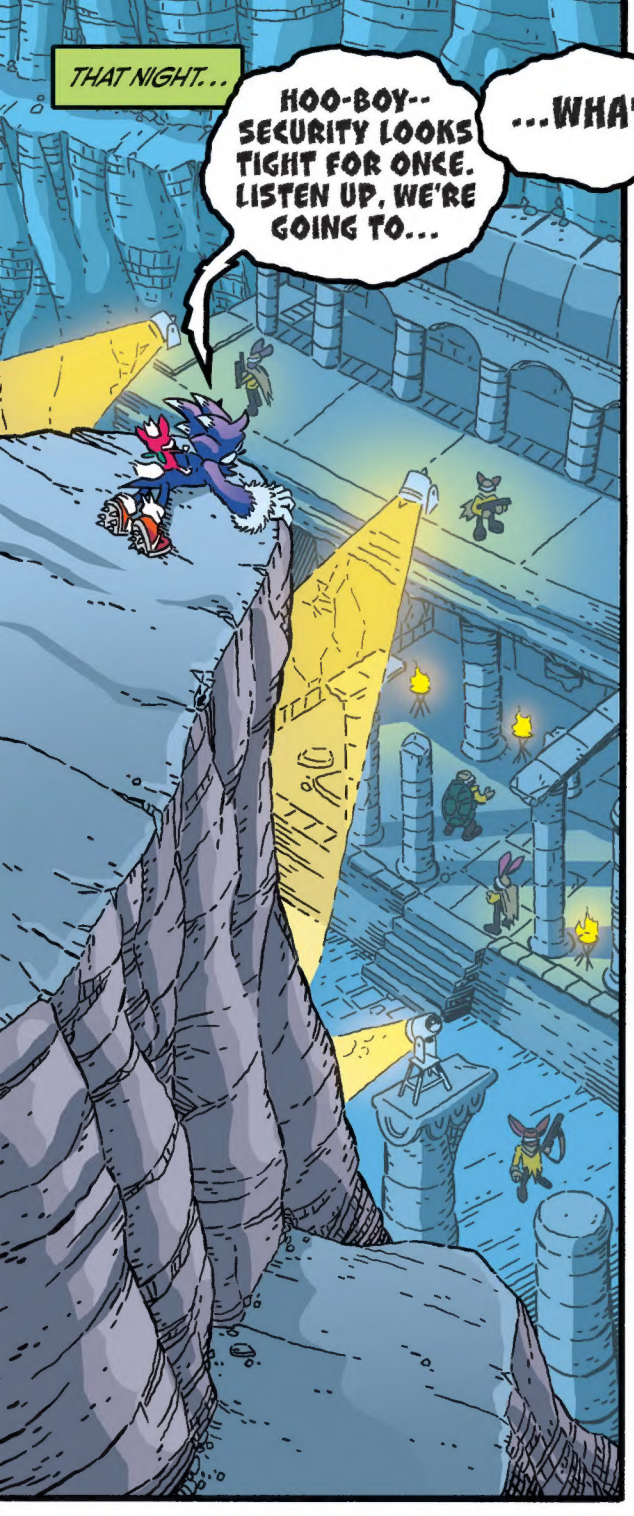

ANY LUCK?
NADA. AND IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE THE PROFESSOR HAS BEEN BY HIS OFFICE LATELY.*
SORRY, SIR. NOTHING ON OUR END, EITHER.
*SONIC RESCUED HIM IN SONIC THE HEDGEHOG VOL. 2, "THE CHASE."

AND THAT'S WHY YOU HIRE A SPY!
YOU FOUND A LEAD?
BETTER!


WHOOSH!
...OR WORSE, DEPENDING ON HOW YOU LOOK AT IT.
THE EGG ARMY HAS KIDNAPPED HIM AND ARE USING HIM TO DO REPAIRS TO AN OLD TEMPLE. WE KINDA BUSTED IT UP DURING A FIGHT A WHILE BACK.

WHAT'S SO IMPORTANT ABOUT HIM, ANYWAY?
EET IS A VERY COMPLICATED, MYSTICAL MATTER. YOU SEE...
HE HAS KEYS THAT OPEN A TEMPLE THAT FIXES THE PLANET.
...ALL RIGHT, PERHAPS NOT TOO COMPLICATED...

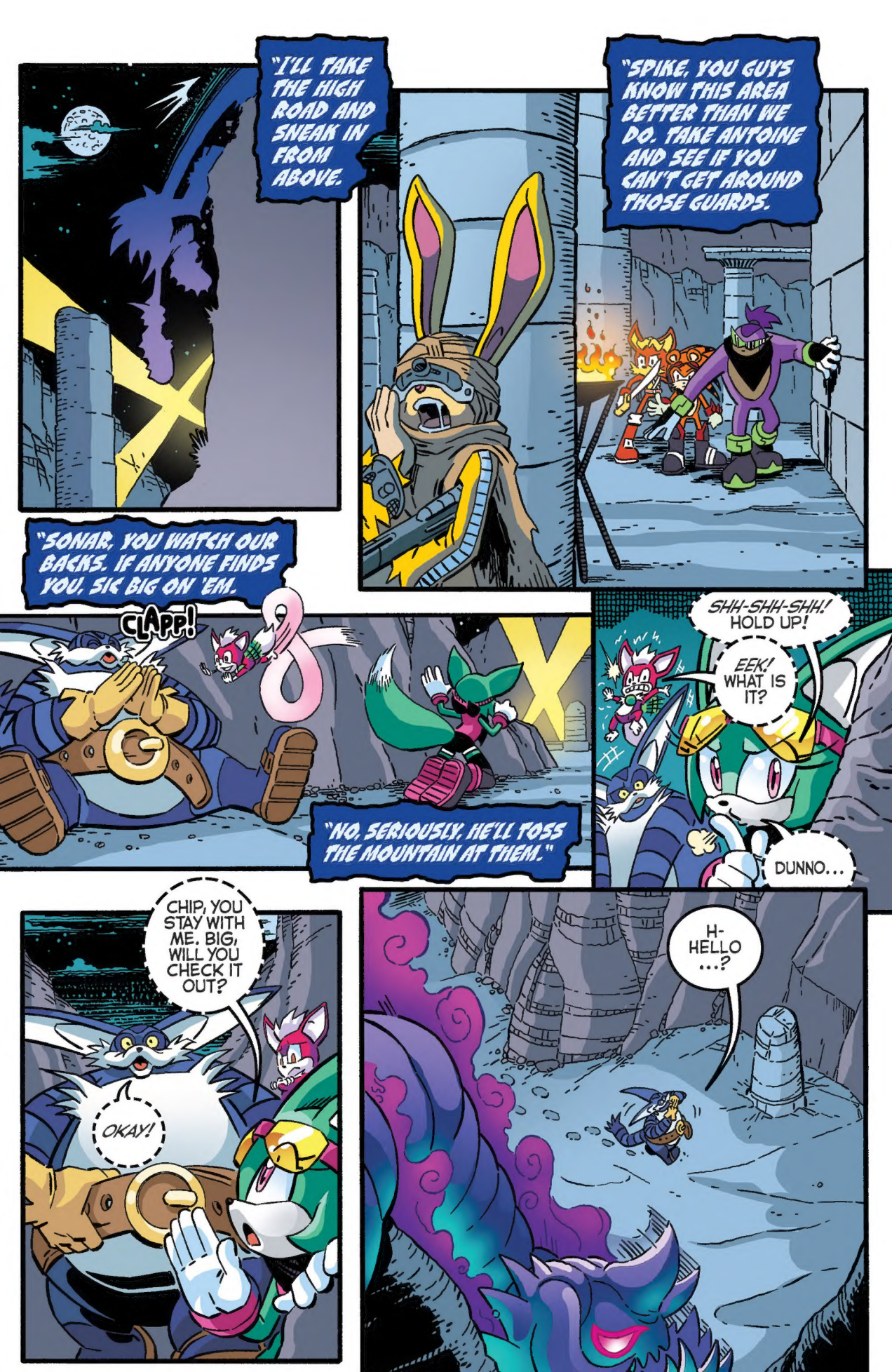

YOU KNOW WHERE THIS TEMPLE IS, RIGHT?
ABSOLUTELY.
THEN WE'VE GOT NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT! LET'S GO KICK SOME EGG ARMY BUTT!
ALL RIGHT! ANOTHER RESCUE MISSION!


THAT NIGHT...
HOO-BOY-- SECURITY LOOKS TIGHT FOR ONCE. LISTEN UP, WE'RE GOING TO...
...WHAT?

S-SORRY. J-JUST...WE WEREN'T EXPECTING THIS SIDE OF YOU!
ONE OF YOU WILL HAVE TO DESCRIBE IT FOR ME LATER.
I WANT TO KNOW WHAT ALL THE FUSS IS ABOUT.
WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM?
OH, EET WAS TERRIBLE! I WAS THERE! EET IS A STORY OF DANGER AND SACRIFICE! ONE OF PERIL AND--
SONIC BREATHED A BUNCH OF DARK GAIA GAS, AND NOW HE TRANSFORMS AT NIGHT.*
*SONIC THE HEDGEHOG VOL. 1, "COUNTDOWN TO CHAOS."

YOU ARE BEING ZE SPOILING SPORT.
OH, SORRY.
I DIDN'T KNOW WE WERE PLAYING. CAN I BE ON YOUR TEAM?
NOT ZAT KIND OF SPORT!

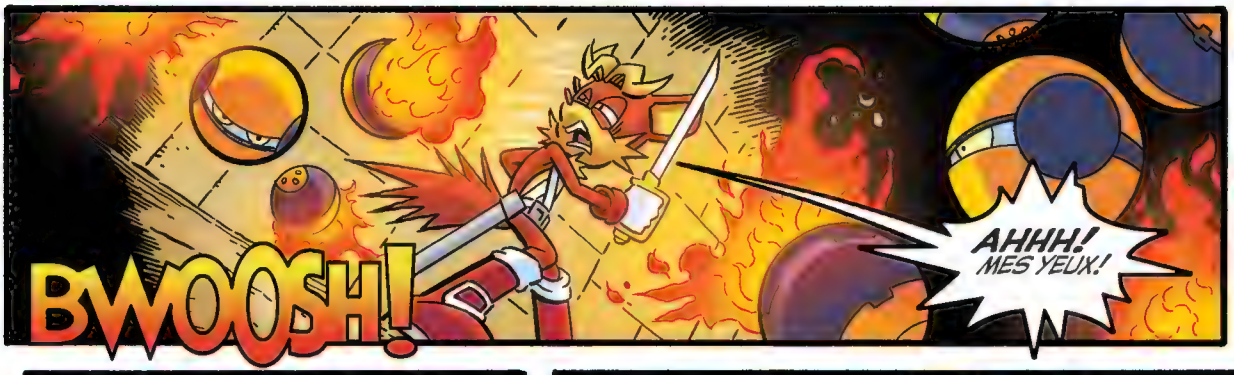
I DON'T KNOW HOW SAL HAS THE PATIENCE FOR THIS LEADER-THING...
LINE UP! WE'RE GOING TO SPLIT INTO TEAMS!


"I'LL TAKE THE HIGH ROAD AND SNEAK IN FROM ABOVE.
"SPIKE, YOU GUYS KNOW THIS AREA BETTER THAN WE DO. TAKE ANTOINE AND SEE IF YOU CAN'T GET AROUND THOSE GUARDS.
"SONAR, YOU WATCH OUR BACKS. IF ANYONE FINDS YOU, SIC BIG ON 'EM.
CLAPP!
"NO, SERIOUSLY, HE'LL TOSS THE MOUNTAIN AT THEM."
SHH-SHH-SHH! HOLD UP!
EEK! WHAT IS IT?
DUNNO...
CHIP, YOU STAY WITH ME. BIG, WILL YOU CHECK IT OUT?
OKAY!
H-HELLO ...?

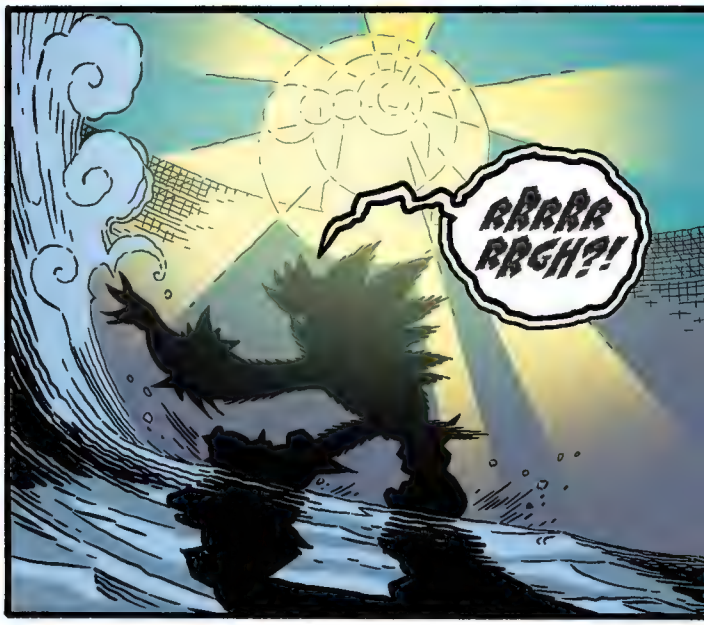
PROBLEM, T.B.?
FOOTPRINTS IN THE DIRT. SHALLOW. OLD. IT MEANS THE EGG ARMY HAS FOUND THIS TUNNEL.

LET'S SPLIT UP AND SCOUT AHEAD A BIT.
AGREED. SPIKE, THIS WAY.
OKAY, MISTER D'COOLETTE, YOU TAKE THAT HALL.
CERTAINEMENT. I AM JUST WISHING IT WAS NOT SO DARK.

NOT ZAT I AM AFRAID OF ZE DARK.
ANYMORE.
ALL ZAT MUCH.


BWOOSH!
AHHH! MES YEUX!

GOTTA ADMIT, THESE STRETCHY ARMS ARE FUN TO SWING AROUND ON! ALMOST MAKES SNEAKING AROUND TOO EASY, THOUGH...


RRRRR RRGH?!

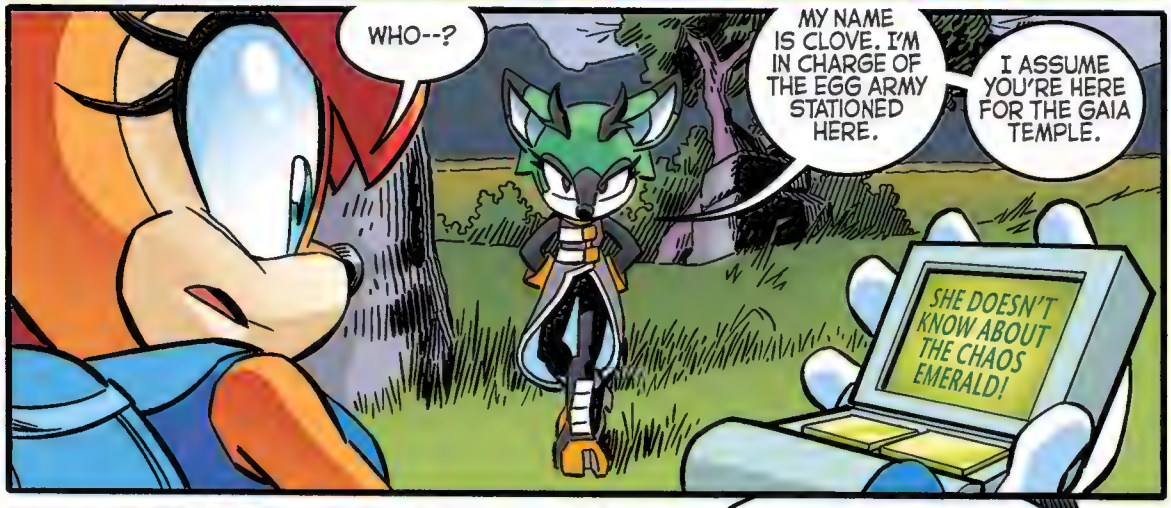
YOU'RE A LONG WAY FROM HOME, SONIC THE WEREHOG
A PITY YOU'LL DIE HERE.
NEPHTHYS THE VULTURE REGIONAL EGG BOSS
SONIC AND HIS FRIENDS CAME TO RESCUE A GAIA KEY GUARDIAN, BUT WHO'S GOING TO RESCUE THEM?!
DON'T MISS OUT ON EVEN MORE ADVENTURE WITH SONIC UNIVERSE, SONIC SUPER DIGEST AND THE GRAPHIC NOVEL LIBRARY!

STONE STORM-LANDS ZONE...
AH DON'T GET IT WITH YOU EGG ARMY TYPES...
IS IT WORTH SELLIN' YOURSELF TO DR. EGGMAN JUST FOR SOME FANCY ROBOTICS?
HIDDEN COSTS
PART TWO
WRITER: ALEAH BAKER
PENCILS: EVAN STANLEY
INKS: TERRY AUSTIN
COLORS: GABRIEL CASSATA
LETTERS: JOHN WORKMAN
UGH!

UH, HYPOCRITE MUCH? WHAT ARE YOU, SOME KIND OF SELF-HATING CYBORG?
AHH--!
SERIOUSLY, WHAT IS IT? SCARED OF A LITTLE SELF-IMPROVEMENT?
"SELF-IMPROVEMENT" ?!
AH DIDN'T ASK FOR THIS!!!

OOH, DID I HIT A NERVE?
I MEAN, I GUESS ONE OF YOUR ARMS STILL HAS THOSE-- OOF!
YOU OBNOXIOUS LITTLE--
!
CRRUMBLE
DON'T MOVE.
OH, YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME.
AH SAID DON'T --!
AHHHH HHHHH!

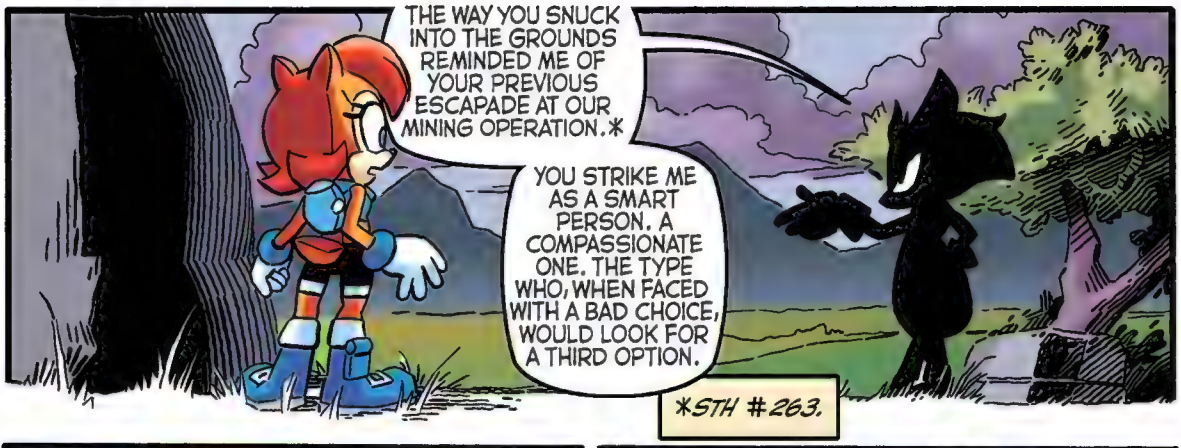
ELSEWHERE IN THE RUINS...
PRINCESS SALLY ACORN.


WHO--?
MY NAME IS CLOVE. I'M IN CHARGE OF THE EGG ARMY STATIONED HERE.
I ASSUME YOU'RE HERE FOR THE GAIA TEMPLE.
SHE DOESN'T KNOW ABOUT THE CHAOS EMERALD!

...YES. THAT'S RIGHT.
SO WHAT HAPPENS NOW? ...LET ME TELL YOU HOW I SEE IT.

YOUR FREEDOM FIGHTERS MOUNT AN ATTACK, CHASE MY PEOPLE OUT AND TAKE CONTROL OF THE TEMPLE FOR YOURSELVES...
...UNTIL EGGMAN ORDERS ME TO TAKE IT BACK, LEADING TO MORE FIGHTING. HE WON'T LET YOU KEEP IT, NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS TO US. THERE WOULD BE NO END TO IT.

SO YOU'RE SAYING I SHOULD JUST BACK DOWN?
YES.
AND WHY WOULD I DO THAT, WHEN THE PLANET'S AT STAKE?


THE WAY YOU SNUCK INTO THE GROUNDS REMINDED ME OF YOUR PREVIOUS ESCAPADE AT OUR MINING OPERATION.*
YOU STRIKE ME AS A SMART PERSON. A COMPASSIONATE ONE. THE TYPE WHO, WHEN FACED WITH A BAD CHOICE, WOULD LOOK FOR A THIRD OPTION.
*STH #263.

YOU'RE PRESUMING A LOT OF ME. FOR INSTANCE, YOU'RE ASSUMING I'M ALONE. YOU CAME HERE ON YOUR OWN, NOT KNOWING IF I'D JUST TAKE YOU PRISONER.
TRUE. AND IF I'D MADE A MISTAKE, I'D DESERVE THE CONSEQUENCES.

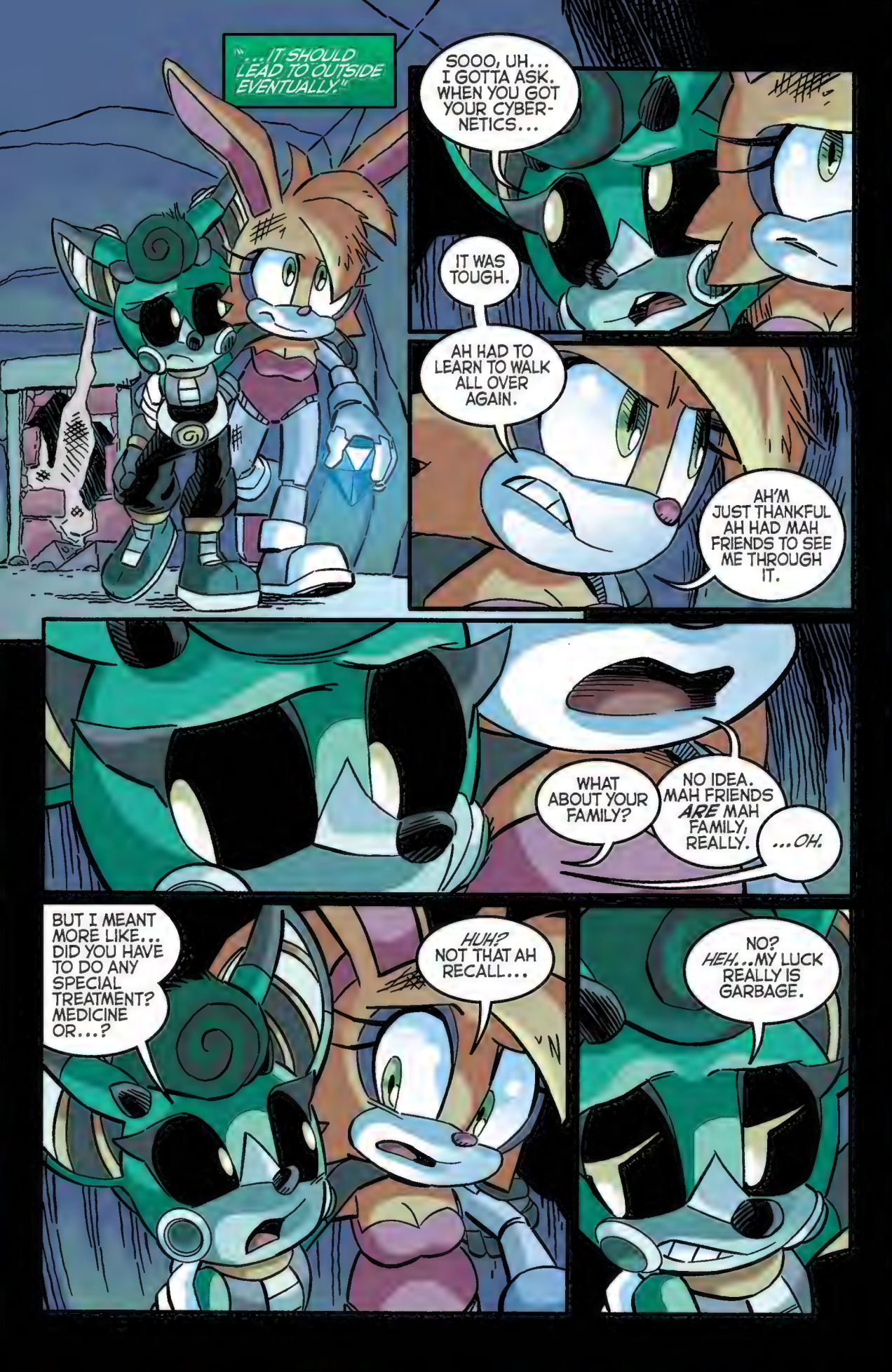
BUT I CAME HERE BECAUSE I THOUGHT YOU'D BE WILLING TO HEAR ME OUT.
WAS I WRONG?
...
I DIDN'T THINK SO.

YOU'RE PRETTY CONFIDENT, AREN'T YOU?...FINE. WE'LL LEAVE THE TEMPLE ALONE.
GLAD TO HEAR IT.
THOUGH...

I WILL ADMIT...WHILE I WAS HOPING YOU WERE AS REASONABLE AS YOU SEEMED, I DIDN'T EXPECT YOU TO AGREE TO THIS SO READILY. LIKE YOU SAID, THE PLANET IS AT STAKE. SO LET ME TAKE ANOTHER GUESS HERE...
THIS ISN'T THE GAIA TEMPLE.
...BUT MAYBE I DON'T KNOW ANY BETTER. I SUPPOSE I'LL JUST HAVE TO RETURN TO MY POST. THIS CONVERSATION IS RISKY ENOUGH AS-IS, ANYWAY.
WAIT! YOU'RE WORKING FOR EGGMAN, BUT THEN YOU'RE JUST GOING TO SIT BACK AND PLAY IGNORANT? MAYBE... MAYBE I CAN HELP YOU--
BY NOT INVOLVING MY PEOPLE IN MORE FIGHTING, YOU ARE HELPING.
GOODBYE, PRINCESS.

MEANWHILE...
COUGH COUGH
UHN...
WAY TO GO, IDIOT! YOU--
OW OW OW!
UGH, I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS! MY SISTER IS GONNA FREAK...
MAYBE YOU CAN JUST ASK OL' EGGMAN FOR A NEW LEG. WHAT'S ONE MORE SELFISH UPGRADE?
SELFISH?
IT'S SELFISH OF ME TO NOT WANNA BE SICK ALL THE TIME? I'M SELFISH FOR WANTING MY STUPID EYES AND EARS TO WORK AGAIN?!
...AH JUST... WAS EGGMAN REALLY THE ONLY OPTION?
OH, GEE, I SHOULD HAVE JUST GONE TO THE LOCAL CYBORG STORE, I GUESS? WHAT WERE MY OPTIONS, HUH? C'MON, TELL ME.
YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT ME!
...YER RIGHT. AH DON'T.

WHEN AH WAS A KID, AH WISHED MAH BODY COULD GO BACK TO THE WAY IT WAS. SO THE IDEA THAT ANYONE WOULD WILLINGLY GIVE THAT UP...
NEVER MIND. AH'M SORRY.
LOOK, WE AIN'T GETTIN' OUT THE WAY WE CAME IN. THIS IS YOUR TURF. GOT ANY IDEAS?
IF I TELL YOU, ARE YOU GONNA GIVE ME THE EMERALD?
NO. BUT AH WILL HELP YOU WALK OUTTA HERE.
I DON'T WANT YOUR HELP.
AH CAN TELL. BUT AH BET THAT SISTER OF YOURS'LL BE WORRIED.
...SIGH
FINE. FINE, WHATEVER.
WE'VE BEEN USING THESE OLD TUNNELS FOR STORAGE. BECAUSE OF THE RAIDS AND STUFF, WE SEALED OFF THE SECTIONS WE WEREN'T USING. IF WE CAN BUST THROUGH...


"...IT SHOULD LEAD TO OUTSIDE EVENTUALLY."
SOOO, UH... I GOTTA ASK. WHEN YOU GOT YOUR CYBER-NETICS...
IT WAS TOUGH.
AH HAD TO LEARN TO WALK ALL OVER AGAIN.
AH'M JUST THANKFUL AH HAD MAH FRIENDS TO SEE ME THROUGH IT.
WHAT ABOUT YOUR FAMILY?
NO IDEA. MAH FRIENDS ARE MAH FAMILY, REALLY.
...OH.
BUT I MEANT MORE LIKE... DID YOU HAVE TO DO ANY SPECIAL TREATMENT? MEDICINE OR...?
HUH? NOT THAT AH RECALL...
NO? HEH...MY LUCK REALLY IS GARBAGE.

THIS IS ONE O' THOSE STORAGE ROOMS YOU MENTIONED?
YUP. I DUNNO WHICH PART OF THE GROUNDS THIS GOES TO, BUT IT'S A WAY OUT.
WELL, THEN, NO OFFENSE, BUT AH'M LEAVIN' YOU HERE. AH'M SURE SOMEONE'LL BE ALONG TO GET YOU SOON ENOUGH.
DON'T MOVE!
HEY, HOW ABOUT THAT? YOU WERE RIGHT!
NEXT TIME: THE FATE OF THE CHAOS EMERALD! THE FATE OF BUNNIE! AND A SHOCKING SECRET REVEALED!

Letter from the EDITOR

Editorial commentary that's been "spiked" with information!

Hey there, Sonic comic readers!

Hope you all enjoyed the double dose of **Freedom Fighters** this issue! What did everyone think of the newcomers **Spike**, **Sonar** and **Trevor**? We'd like to know, so please write in to **Sonic@ArchieComics.com** to tell us who is your favorite!

Sonic comic scribes **Ian Flynn** and **Aleah Baker** came up with the initial designs for these new Freedom Fighters with some fine-tuning done by yours truly! Check out the awesome production art below!

As many of you could probably guess, Spike, Sonar and Trevor are modeled after the trio of Sonic, Tails and Knuckles! Of course, each has their own unique abilities. Spike can spin like a whirlwind, Sonar can use her ultrasonic hearing to gather intel and Trevor can burrow underground for surprise attacks! Pretty cool, huh?

BELOW: Design concept for **Spike the Porcupine**.

Well that's all for this segment! See y'all next time for more behind-the-scenes fun!

– Vincent "Vin" Lovallo
Editor

BELOW: Design concept for **Sonar the Fennec**.

BELOW: Design concept for **Trevor Burrow the Mole**.

SONIC GRAMS FAN ART

Stephanie C.C. sent to Sonic@ArchieComics.com

Mike J. sent to Sonic@ArchieComics.com

Teddy D. sent to Sonic@ArchieComics.com

John S.Z. sent to Sonic@ArchieComics.com

Mike M. sent to Sonic@ArchieComics.com

OFF PANEL

A HUMOROUS COMIC STRIP FEATURING TWO SPINY, ANTHROPOMORPHIC CREATURES IN WHICH A FUNNY JOKE IS MADE

HEAVY META OR OVERDRIVE

SCRIPT: *ERIC ESQUIVEL* PENCILS: *LAMAR WELLS* INKS: *RICK BRYANT* COLORS: *ALEAH BAKER*

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SONIC GRAMS

WRITE TO US @: SONIC GRAMS C/O ARCHIE COMIC PUBLICATIONS, INC. 629 FIFTH AVENUE, SUITE 100 PELHAM, NY 10803-1242 E-MAIL: SONIC@ARCHIECOMICS.COM OR TWEET AT US USING #SONICGRAMS!

Dear 'Sonic Grams,'
Hi! My name is Nina and I'm possibly your biggest fan!

Hi, Nina! Nice to meet you!

I love your comics! This is my first time writing to you and I'm pretty excited! I've got some questions for you:

1. Will we be seeing any more of Captain Metal and the Egg o' War?

When we last saw the the Egg o' War (housing what was left of Cpt. Metal) it sat waterlogged, with a hole in its side at the bottom of the ocean in Blaze's world! Will it rise to ravage worlds again? You'll just have to wait and see!

2. Will Eclipse be back for revenge?

When we last saw Eclipse, he'd crash-landed a stolen G.U.N. cruiser into a swamp somewhere on the planet's surface! Will he return with his Dark Arms to eat the people of Sonic's world? You'll just have to wait and see!

3. What type of animal is Amy Rose?

When we last saw Amy Rose she was a hedgehog! Will she ever be anything other than a hedgehog? You'll just have to wait and (No. The answer is no.) see!

4. Can I be pleeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeease be Silver's #1 fan?

Nina P.
from **Massachusetts**

When we last saw Nina, I was answering her letter in the previous column! Will she ever be Silver's #1 fan? You'll just have to wait (Sure, OK.) and see!

Dear 'Sonic Grams,'
I've been a reader of the Sonic comics for a long time. I was very excited for your *Sonic the Fighters* adaptation! It's my favorite obscure Sonic game! My favorite character in the comics is Bean and I hope his crazy, wacky antics remain in this comic forever. I have one question though: Is the purple pufferfish girl from the "Champions" arc the royal daughter of King Puff and Queen Angelica from "Waves of Change"?

Seamus B. sent to
Sonic@ArchieComics.com

Waaait... do you mean the same purple pufferfish girl parading through Shamar Square who's carrying that weird magic rainy umbrella and also appears on page 7 of this very issue?!?!? @____@;;;;;

I dunno what you're talking about, Seamus, but thanks for the letter!

Dear 'Sonic Grams,'
Hi Guys! You are great! Tails you are my favorite. So on video game day for homecoming, I dressed up as you! Keep on running, Sonic! Keep punching things, Knuckles! Have fun, Amy! Good luck, Sticks! Tails, I hope you keep on being my favorite! Peace out!

Alex A. sent to
Sonic@ArchieComics.com

Peace out, Alex! That's cool that you dressed up! Keep on keepin' on, friend!

Dear 'Sonic Grams,'
I just wanted to write you guys a quick (no pun intended) letter saying how much I LOVE your Sonic comics.

Well thanks so much! We LOVE hearing back from our awesome readers!

I became a Sonic fan on his 15th anniversary and I've stayed a devout fan ever since! The day I first met Sonic is probably one of my clearest memories. My Mom had gone to the pharmacy close to our home while I was watching TV. When she came back she gave me a surprise: A Sonic comic book! I was so excited as I delved into "His World"! My first book was *Sonic X* #20 and I read it everyday! (This is where I weep true blue tears.)

True blue tears is da best tearses there is!

I started buying his games, watching his shows, buying his merch and, after I look back at all of this, I think, "Life's pretty sweet! I'll always love Sonic and will always support him because he's the most 'way past cool' character I know!" Keep on reaching for those stars, guys!

Stephen M. sent to
Sonic@ArchieComics.com

Thanks for that heartfelt letter, Stephen! It warms our hearts to know that everything we do makes every Sonic fan, no matter who or where they are, a little bit happier!

And with that, we end this letter column! See you guys later!

CHECK OUT MORE AWESOME TITLES FROM Archie ACTION!

NEXT ISSUE: SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 279

"FACE OF THE ENEMY" Pt.2

AND "HIDDEN COSTS Pt.3"